

Women's Leadership in Peacebuilding: Conflict, Community and Care



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This book was published as part of the preparations for the 2014 International Colloquium on Women's Leadership in Peace Building. Published at a critical time in human history in which social concerns are compounded by threats to world wide safety and survival. War, destabilization, economic constraints, human rights violations and state intervention have lead to unprecedented numbers of refugees in many regions of the world. In 2014 the Ebola epidemic in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea transformed a health crisis into a peace and security challenge. It confirmed what was already known, that peace and care are intrinsically related. The well-being and care of people in affected communities and the means to provide care within communities is central to conflict-resolution.

The leadership that women offer in this context constitutes an important element of peace-building, as is women's ability to participate in governance. In an increasingly connected world women and men 'care' for others across borders and continents, linking families and communities through mobile phones and social media.

However, regional and civil conflict, challenges of changing hegemonic power and new threats to peace and well-being of peoples impact particularly on gender-relations and endanger women's safety. In this rapidly changing reality, the philosophy of relations in the African worldview of Ubuntu, the Christian understanding of community and old customs and cultures of care, may be invaluable facilitators of peace.

This book builds on earlier work of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Elisabeth Rehn on Women, War and Peace (2002) and examines the relations between women's leadership and peace building.